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## RECENT LITERATURE.

**The Woodland of the Southwest, by Chas. F. Lummis.<sup>1</sup>**

—For those readers who have read but a few books of travel on the Southwest, this snug little volume will be quite a revelation. The contents of the twenty-two chapters scarcely contain anything that has been written or sketched before, except a few pages on the Moqui Snake dance and Indian superstitions. The thoroughness of his familiarity with Pueblo customs and folklore is only equalled by the graphic qualities of his style. In looking about the "strange corners" which the author describes, we are first attracted by a prairie-dog hunt, with the Navajo Indians put in scene to fill their larder. White people of the Southwest never think of killing this rodent for food, because it is so difficult to attain with a rifle ball; but these natives utilize abundant downpours of rain to conduct the floods into their tunnels and afterward haul up their dead bodies for a feast. To get rid of the prairie-dog plague, people have proposed to kill them with poisoned apple quarters. The belief in witchcraft is as potent among the whites and Indians of New Mexico as it ever was during the middle ages. Manslaughter is committed for any act arousing even the suspicion of witchery, and the fact that one-half of the Isleta people are wizards and witches speaks loud enough. The "Finishing an Indian Boy" shows principles of education in full force now, which our Northern Indians began to drop as early as one century ago. In the chapter "The American Sahara" the wide waste is delineated in colors none too sharp or cruel. Lieut. Wheeler is mentioned by mistake as its earliest explorer instead of Lieut. Whipple. The marvelous wealth of objects presented in Lummis's volume will attract ever and again the class of readers and tourists which seeks instruction rather than pleasure in books of travel, and they will hold it dear as a publication of really scientific value, standing far above most of the productions of our present sensation-loving period of literature.

"The Wanderings of Cochiti" is another very interesting sketch from our "Wonderland" on the upper Rio Grande. It is printed in the "Century Magazine," January, 1893, and describes and also pictures in photographic reproductions the people, customs, history and scenery of Cochiti, one of the Quéres Pueblos of Northern New Mex-

<sup>1</sup>Some strange corners of our country, the Woodland of the Southwest, p. 270. 12 mo., richly illustrated. New York, The Century Co., 1892.

ico, and the celebrated gorge of Tyú-on-yi with its rock carvings in the vicinity of that pueblo. The scene of Bandelier's archæologic novel, "The Delight-Makers," is placed in that locality.

**Macmillan's *Metasperma of the Minnesota Valley*.<sup>2</sup>—**

In this thick, handsomely printed book, in which excellent paper and an equally excellent selection of type are manifest, we have a notable departure from the usual "report" issued from a State printing office. So unlike the State or Government reports is this volume that one has to turn to the imprint to satisfy himself that it is actually the work of the State printer. If this model is followed in the future by other State printers then indeed is this book a noble pioneer in a much needed reform in State book making.

Turning to the more important part of the book, namely its contents, we find that the author also has broken away from the traditional form and style of State reports, and has given to the botanical world a useful book. He first of all chose an area with natural boundaries, instead of one arbitrarily set off for political and not scientific purposes. In his choice of the Minnesota Valley the author seems to have been fortunate in having to deal with an area of more than usual interest, but it is likely that if in other States natural areas were studied, similar interesting features would be discovered.

The list of plants includes 1174 species and varieties, a large number when one remembers that the area covers but 16,000 square miles, and the only plants enumerated are the *Metaspermæ* (*Angiospermæ*).

These species are found in prairies and woodlands, in "meadows, marshes, swamps and bogs." There is, however, a considerable preponderance of the rolling prairies. The soils are not much varied, and the difference in altitude is little more than 1300 feet from the lowest point at Fort Snelling (688 ft.), to the highest hills in the eastern part of North Dakota (2000 ft.).

The author aims to trace the history of the flora of this valley. To him it is not enough to tell what plants occupy the territory; he seeks to show how they came to do so, from whence they came, and why they came. Accordingly we have a series of discussions such as we rarely (if ever) have had in books dealing with local floras. Thus one finds such headings as these: "The Dynamic Relations of Plants,"

<sup>2</sup>Geological and Natural History Survey of Minnesota. Conway Macmillan, State Botanist. *The Metaspermæ of the Minnesota Valley*, a list of the higher seed-producing plants indigenous to the Drainage Basin of the Minnesota River, by Conway Macmillan. Reports of the Survey, Botanical Series, i, Dec. 29, 1892, Minneapolis, Minnesota, pp. xiii, 826. Large octavo.